



FIA WOMEN IN MOTOR SPORT  
MARCH 2017 – ISSUE 12

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# AUTO+ WOMEN IN MOTOR SPORT



## TAMARA TAKES THE EURO TEST

Rallying's rising star joins forces with Opel to take on her biggest challenge yet – a bid for U-27 glory in the ERC



CONTACTS:  
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Welcome to this latest edition of the FIA's  
AUTO+ Women in Motorsport newsletter.

As we begin new seasons of motor sport action,  
this edition looks at the sporting moves made by  
a number of women across a range of categories,  
from rallying to circuit racing, from Europe to  
South America to Australia.

Our cover story features rising rally star Tamara  
Molinaro, who thanks to help from the FIA  
Women in Motorsport Commission, is taking her  
first steps onto the international stages in the FIA  
European Rally Championship Junior series.

Meanwhile, Down Under, established rally  
queen Molly Taylor is beginning her defence of  
the Australian Rally Championship title.

Another racer making a mark Down Under is  
single-seater driver Simone De Silvestro, who  
has swapped Formula E for a new challenge - an  
assault on the intensely competitive V8 Supercars  
Championship. We also focus on Colombian  
Tatiana Calderon's progress as an F1 development  
driver with Sauber and on a young driver making  
waves in the South American racing scene, Grace  
Hemmerde.

Finally, we look back on the global motor sport  
celebrations to mark this year's International  
Women's Day, events that prove women are  
boldly changing attitudes, and the shape of our  
sport's podiums, worldwide.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

Your AUTO+ team





Tamara Molinaro is this year competing in the U-27 class of the FIA's ERC Junior category.

# Molinaro to step up to ERC Junior with works Opel drive

Rising rally star Tamara Molinaro will this year contest the FIA European Rally Championship Juniors category, in the Under 27 class, as a factory Opel driver.

The step up to ERC Junior competition is the latest milestone on the FIA Women in Motorsport Commission-supported driver's path towards a career at rallying's top level and follows a year spent training at the wheel of an ADAM R2.

In 2016, in part working with highly experienced co-driver Ilka Minor, the Italian took part in five rallies. These included the Austrian Championship's Liezen Rally, where Molinaro finished third in the R2 class and 13th overall, the 3 Städte rally of the German Championship where she was second in the R2 class and 30th overall and the Hungarian Championship's Mikulás rally where she won the R2 class and finished 22nd overall.

Tamara, whose programme is also backed by Pirelli and Red Bull, will compete in the class alongside co-driver Ursula Mayrhofen.

"I really have an amazing opportunity this year," says Tamara of the campaign. "I watched to some 2016 onboarders from the rallies of the ERC Junior and they look amazing. I'm sure I will learn a lot but I think it will be not easy. I don't have a lot of experience, but I am sure I will enjoy it at 100 per cent.

"It's incredible to be able to work with Opel as a factory driver. It's a huge chance for me to learn, and not just about the driving. I will try to be professional and to collaborate in the best way with everyone from the team.

"This will be my first full rally season so I would say that it feels like it's the start," she adds. "The goal is to win the Ladies Trophy. What I would like to achieve this year is to

improve with every rally and to reduce the gap to the guys fighting in the R2 class."

The ERC Junior competition won't form the whole of Tamara's 2017 schedule, however. The Italian is also scheduled to take part in the German round of the FIA World Rally Championship and a further six to eight other rallies, though just which is yet to be confirmed. "It will be an amazing year and I honestly can't wait to start," she concludes.

Joining Tamara in the ERC Junior category will be defending ERC Ladies' Champion Catie Munnings. The 18-year-old Briton will contest the opening FIA ERC Junior Under 27 Championship round in the Azores at the end of this month as she continues her efforts to secure a full-season campaign.

Munnings has signed to drive a Peugeot 208 R2 for the Saintéloc Junior Team but needs additional funding to complete the six-event schedule alongside co-driver, Germany's Anne Katharina Stein.

"I'm so excited to get back behind the wheel," she told FIAERC.com. "Apart from a short test in France last month I've not sat in a rally car since Latvia last year – which feels such a long time ago.

"We had a few hiccups over the winter months but are able to make the first round. We are working hard to secure the rest of the season and have a few exciting possibilities on the horizon but, for the moment, we're taking it event by event. I've spent most of my time on the phone and in meetings and now can't wait to get on that flight to the

Azores! Hopefully, Anne and I will be able to pick up where we left last year and continue to increase the pace. I've set myself some big personal goals this year so bring it on."

The ERC Junior U27 Championship takes place over six rounds with the gravel-based Azores Airlines Rallye opening the season from 30 March-1 April. Rally Islas Canarias (4-6 May) is the first of four all-asphalt events and is followed by Rally Rzeszow (Poland, 3-5 August), Barum Czech Rally Zlín (25-27 August) and Rally di Roma Capitale (Italy, 15-17 September). The all-gravel Rally Liepāja in Latvia concludes the season from 6-8 October.

Clockwise from top right: Catie Munnings; Tamara Molinaro; Tamara in action during last year's WRC round in Germany; Tamara and new co-driver Ursula Mayrhofer.







Molly Taylor and co-driver Bill Hayes celebrate last year ARC title win at the final round in Coffs Harbour.

# Taylor made for a title defence

Last year Molly Taylor became the first woman to win the Australian Rally Championship, and now, armed with a works Production Class Subaru WRX for 2017, it's a title the Sydneysider is determined to hold onto.

Just four months ago, Molly Taylor made Australian motor sport history by becoming the first female driver to win the country's national championship when a stunning victory at the final round at Coffs Harbour handed the Sydney native the title by just two points.

The time since has been a whirlwind, with Taylor becoming the focus of intense media attention. In between she's also had to make her preparations for a new Australian Rally Championship campaign with the Subaru do Motorsport team.

"Obviously to win the title was a huge moment for the whole team and pretty surreal to be honest," said Molly, a driver formerly supported by the FIA Women in Motorsport Commission. "I was pretty overwhelmed by the response we received, particularly in the mainstream media, which was fantastic for rallying. I feel like it helped build the momentum of our sport and increase it's exposure to people who might not have otherwise followed rallying, so I'm really proud of our team being able to achieve that too. I'm not sure whether being able to say that you're the Australian Rally Champion will ever sink in fully!"

The title win has taught her a lot about her craft, however. "On the final day at Rally Australia, when the battle for the title was so close and everything was still up in the air, I remember thinking that either way – if we won the Championship or not - that I was really satisfied with our performance over the season and there was not much I would go back and change. So personally, and for my confidence that meant a lot.

"I've learned and grown as a driver a huge amount over the past year," she adds. "Having a year under my belt as a factory team driver has taught me a lot about focus, which has really helped me improve. One of my key learnings from last year is the importance of the 'one per centers', keeping that attention to detail and improving every area, no matter how small, so that we're always in the best possible position."

Taylor and co-driver Bill Hayes are contesting the new championship with a new All-Wheel Drive WRX STI in the Production Rally Car (PRC) class, which is less technically restrictive than the Group N Class Taylor pursued last year.

"One of the biggest differences is that we can increase the turbo restrictor, which allows us to gain more power from

the engine," she explains. "We are also allowed to make the car lighter, fit a sequential gearbox and a 'pedal box' brake assembly. The suspension and chassis set up is more or less the same as last year – we have a great base to work with."

She's keen to leverage her position as champion to connect with young fans too. "I think winning the Championship, but also just competing at this level has had a much bigger impact on young girls than I could have ever anticipated. I've always been so focused on driving and what I want achieve in the car that I didn't appreciate that there were all these young girls, and boys, out there watching what we are doing. That part of the sport is so exciting, to be able to meet a young girl with the same passion for the sport that you have, and to have some part in nurturing that passion – that's what it's all about!"

Taylor's position in the pecking order has changed too, with the Subaru driver being viewed as a top contender this year. She's determined to live up to that billing.

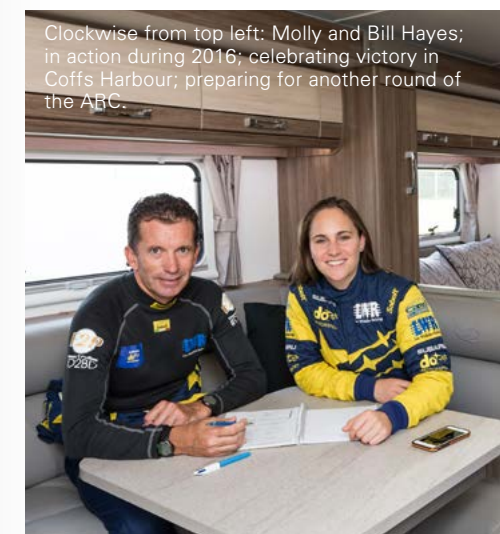
"I think we are in for another competitive year, maybe even more so than 2016," she says. "We will see some newly built 'AP4' cars entering, so we're excited to see where we stack up. Our goal is to be fighting at the top of course, but rallying is always unpredictable, so until we get out on the

stages there are a lot of unknowns. As with last year, we will be giving it everything we have, that's for sure!"

Taylor's new challenge got underway on the weekend of March 17-19 at the Eureka Rally, Victoria. It was a tough start for the defending champion, though, with Molly being plagued by gearbox issues in Heat 1. She had a better outing in Heat 2, finishing fourth to take sixth overall. Her next outing is at the Make Smoking History Forest Rally, in Western Australia from April 21-23.

## CAMS AUSTRALIAN RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP CALENDAR 2017

- Round 1: Eureka Rally, Victoria  
March 17-19
- Round 2: Make Smoking History Forest Rally,  
Western Australia - April 21-23
- Round 3: National Capital Rally, ACT  
May 26-28
- Round 4: Light Force Rally, South Australia  
September 15-17
- Round 5: Kennards Hire Rally Australia, NSW  
November 16-19



Clockwise from top left: Molly and Bill Hayes; in action during 2016; celebrating victory in Coffs Harbour; preparing for another round of the ARC.







## Simona De Silvestro makes solid start to V8 Supercars career

Swiss racer Simona De Silvestro made a solid start to her new career as a V8 Supercar competitor finishing the opening race of the Clipsal 500 in 20th place and then taking 23rd spot in the final race of the weekend in Adelaide.

Former Indycar racer and Sauber F1 Team hopeful De Silvestro last year became the first woman to score a point in Formula E with ninth place at the Long Beach ePrix. Over the winter, however, she made the switch to Australian touring car racing, signing as official driver with Nissan to race with Team Harvey Norman in the top level Australia Supercars Championship.

“In joining Nissan Motorsport, I think the biggest thing is being a factory driver,” said Silvestro last month of the move, which came after an appearance as a wildcard entry with Nissan at the 2016 Bathurst 1000. “It’s great to have the trust from Nissan Motorsport to give me the chance to drive for them. I really enjoyed driving for them at Bathurst. I really enjoyed the car, so there were a lot of things I really liked. And the team as well – it’s a great team – you see there’s a lot of potential. So working with them hopefully will bring a lot of success.

“My expectations for 2017: I think it’s going to be a pretty big challenge for me. Like I’ve said before, most of my career has been in open wheel. The Nissan Altima was feeling pretty great at Bathurst, so I’m sure at the other tracks I’m going to be able to adapt a lot quicker. Learning the tracks and working with the team will be a big challenge but I’m looking forward to it.”

De Silvestro’s first taste of that challenge came in the Clipsal 500, the opening round of the season.

“I had a lot of up and downs,” the Swiss driver told Fox Sports after her championship debut. “I’m still the new kid on the block so you have to earn your stripes and show that you belong. That’s going to take a little bit of time, but I think we will get there. For a first weekend we can be OK with it.”

“These cars are a different animal to drive around, but I’m starting to feel the car,” she added. “If we can qualify a little more towards the front then I think we can run there. This weekend everyone was a bit nervous because you don’t know how everything works.”

Following non-championship outings at Albert Park on the weekend of the Formula One Australian Grand Prix (which featured a best result of P13 in the first of four races across the weekend), Simona’s next chance to score championship points comes at the Tyrepower Tasmania SuperSprint at the short but fast Symmons Plains Raceway, from 7-9 April.



## Welsh team scoops F1 in Schools Women in Motorsport Award

A team from Wales were crowned FIA Women in Motorsport award-winners at the F1 in Schools Finals held late last year in Austin, Texas.

Hailing from Denbigh High School the Tachyon team won three awards in total, from a competition high of seven award nominations and alongside the Women in Motorsport award the team took home the Verbal Presentation Award and Team Sponsorship and Marketing Award. The team finished 12th overall and Amy Martin, Team Manager, won a coveted place in the prestigious Randstad Williams Engineering Academy.

The Academy sees Williams and Randstad mentor students from

across the world as they bid to secure a career as a Formula One engineer.

Amy said after the announcement, “I’m over the moon to have won a place in the Academy. I’m passionate about engineering and very excited to be working with Williams. It’s going to be an amazing opportunity for me to learn more about an industry I hope to make my career and work with some of the best people in the business.”

The competition’s overall World Champions were the Infinite Racing team of Mandoulides Schools in Greece, with the runners-up spot going to the Infinitude team of Brighton Secondary School & St Bede’s College, Australia.



The winning Tachyon team with Sauber Team Principal and FIA WIM Ambassador Monisha Kaltenborn.

## Reading the Road Map of the Future

Following last year’s highly successful FIA Women in Motorsport Seminar in Lisbon, the FIA has drawn together the huge amount of material generated during the two days of discussions into a comprehensive booklet and a video summarising the event.

Recapping the entire seminar, the booklet features material from all of the presentations, debates, and workshops as well as outlining all of the recommendations made during the sessions, including those of the ‘Chart the Future’ session in which the road map for the coming years of Commission activity were developed.

Click [here](#) for the brochure and the video.







Grace Hemmerde in action in her native Peru and (top right) at the FIA Americas Awards prizegiving ceremony in Mexico City in January.

# Grace on the path to glory

Inspired by her late father, Grace Hemmerde has translated a childhood passion for competition into karting championship glory in her native Peru. Here the 22-year-old racer explains how she got her start in motor sport, how it felt to represent South America's female racers at the FIA America's awards and why she's determined to succeed on her own terms.

How did you get into racing?

Racing has been part of my life since I was born. My father was a well-known rally driver in Peru – he was National Champion in 1996 – and, my grandfather was also a well-known driver here.

In 2014, my father took me for the first time to try karting and I loved it. I started practicing with friends who lent me a kart. Then, in January 2015, a friend called and invited me to race a 2-hour kart race as his partner. We trained three or four times but on the day of the race, I drove 15 minutes before an accident ended my race.

Despite that, it made me realise that I love this sport and I started pestering my father to buy me my own kart. Of course it didn't work. He told me he could help me find sponsors, but with my childish mind I believed he should pay for it and not sponsors!

In March of that year my father passed away in a car accident. A week afterwards, a group of friends surprised me with a kart. My life changed then and I realised I would have to look for sponsors. Last year a friend called me and told me I could have his kart as he was buying a new one. Thanks to him, other friends who helped me during the year, and the brands that believed in me and sponsored me, such as Pisco Intipalka and Motul, I raced my first two championships in 2016. This year I aim to race the National and Regional Championships in the same category, with the ambition of winning both.

Who or what is your inspiration?

My inspiration or motivations have changed with time. At the beginning my motivation was my father, he was the reason I started and he gave me the motivation to be good at it, as good as him. But as time passed, my inspiration has become myself. I want to challenge myself every day and in every race. I want to prove myself and do it on my own.

How much competition was there in last year's karting championship?

Last year's championships were really competitive. I competed in the Senior B category, which even though it didn't have many participants, was tough. I was the only girl competing in the category, against very challenging opponents. I participated in the regional and national championships. In the regional championship (X30 Challenge) I finished as runner-up overall. In the nationals I was champion.

How many races were there in the championship, and what were your results?

In the regional championship, X30 Challenge, there were six races (I had a podium in every race and two first places). In the national championship there were four races and I finished, fourth, third and I was second twice.

As a result of your efforts you were invited to the FIA Americas Prize-Giving in Mexico City in January. How proud of that were you?

I was extremely happy. I didn't know about that prize-giving so I was really surprised by the news. I was really glad to be at such an important event and delighted to represent women, being the only girl there.

What are your plans for this year?

This year I will participate in the X30 Challenge and if I secure enough sponsorship I will be glad to participate in the National Championship. I also made my car racing debut in the 6 Horas Peruanas in February where I finished on the podium, third in class driving a 2000cc race car.

What are your ambitions?

My hopes and ambitions in karting are to improve and next year move up to the Senior A category. I know it will be really challenging because of the budget and the experience but that's the goal. I would love to participate in an international race in the future; but that is more a wish than a real goal because of the budget it demands.

Do you find any difficulties being a woman racing in Peru?

Not at all. It is weird finding a girl in motor sport, but as I said I've been in this world since I was born. I'm used to it, so I don't think it is a difficulty and I know lots of people in the sport. Perhaps being a girl even opened a lot of doors for me. Being a girl helped me to get to where I am now.







Sauber Team Principal and FIA Women in Motorsport Commission Ambassador Monisha Kaltenborn.

that gives a certain courage to continue on the path they have chosen. And on the other hand, you look at all the young girls coming up today and you consider the attitude they have to achieving their targets then this could even lead to a feeling of ‘well, if she’s there, I can get there too, and do it better’. So it leads to more girls wanting to come up and in turn to a more competitive environment.”

Commenting on her role with the team, Calderon told motorsport.com: “Sauber has seen the potential in me, and they know I’m a hard worker and a dedicated person. I’m extremely grateful for this opportunity, and I want to thank Monisha and the whole team for opening this door. I’m ready to work hard and learn as much as I can from them.

“Of course driving an F1 car would be a dream, and I want to make sure I’m ready if the chance arrives. This opportunity is a really good start to make it happen.”

# Monisha Kaltenborn welcomes Tatiana Calderon to new role as Sauber Development Driver

Sauber Team Principal Monisha Kaltenborn has welcomed the appointment of GP3 racer Tatiana Calderon as a Development Driver with the Sauber Formula One team saying the Colombian is a “very focused, very determined racing driver”.

“I was introduced to Tatiana by a mutual friend and the first impression was very good,” said the Sauber boss, who is also an FIA Women in Motorsport Commission Ambassador. “She was very focused, very down to earth and very aware of the difficulties she might face. But what impressed me most is that she didn’t make an issue of being a female driver. I was just talking to a very determined racing driver, irrespective of gender. That impressed me a lot.

“I followed her when she scored her first point during the GP3 Series race in Hockenheim 2016, and after that we started discussing more specifically what we can do,” she added. “What’s good about Tatiana is that she might have her ultimate goal, which all racers have, but she just takes it step by step. I certainly didn’t make it look easy for her; rather I told her ‘you know what difficulties there are, you know you have to overcome many things’ but she handled that very well.”

According to Kaltenborn, Calderon’s new role involves a full programme of development focused on improving her racing skills via engineering simulator work alongside race drivers Pascal Wehrlein and Marcus Ericsson at Sauber’s Hinwil factory and attending grands prix with the Swiss team where she will be involved in all of the team’s race preparation. Calderon will also continue in the GP3 Series for a second season, having debuted last year with the Arden team and scoring points on two occasions.

“The Development Driver programme means that we focus on improving her performance with particular reference to the series she races in – trying to help her improve her skills, and help her reach her target in that series,” said Kaltenborn.

“She will get simulator sessions at which she will work with our engineers. There will be detailed analysis of her performance and she will get specific guidance on whatever weaknesses exist and how she can improve.

“She will also be coming to the factory. It’s equally important that she sees how a Formula One team works, what is expected from a driver in terms of feedback,” she adds.

“Then, when she is at the track she will spend time with the engineers, she will be part of preparatory meetings, debriefs and she’ll watch the sessions from the engineers’ office.

“Whatever she can learn from being exposed to the highest level of motor sport she will definitely be able to apply to the series she races in and it will hopefully make her more competitive.”

The FIA Women Motorsport Commission Ambassador is also sure that Calderon’s role with the team will provide a boost to other young girls attempting to move up the motor sport ladder.

“I think she’s very important to have her as a role model,” she says. “There are two sides to it. On the one hand, young girls will say ‘here’s another woman who has made it’ and

Tatiana Calderon: “Driving an F1 car would be a dream, and I want to make sure I’m ready if the chance arrives.”





# Engineering opportunities for women in motor sport

Career opportunities for women in motor sport have never been more available but despite the sport becoming more open to women there still remains a lack of throughput of women to engineering roles within the industry.

It is a constriction caused in large part by a lack of awareness at school level of engineering as a potential career path for young girls. In a bid to address that knowledge gap, the FIA has produced a new brochure, 'Engineer Your Career – A World of Opportunity in Motor Sport', specifically aimed at encouraging more girls to take up engineering as a career.

"When I was at school I didn't have role models to look up to in engineering, but because I knew I wanted to do it I set my mind on getting experience and went into the industry," said FIA Women in Motorsport engineering ambassador Leena Gade. "My role models were then guys like Ross Brawn and Adrian Newey and I wanted to emulate what they were doing and it certainly helped me get where I am. I hope young girls who want to follow a similar path can now look to people like me and see what is possible. The booklet we have produced shows what women are achieving in our industry and is a great resource that will hopefully help students as they plan their career path."

The brochure explains the possible careers open to students of engineering, including in mechanical, aerospace, civil and electrical engineering, with most featuring skills that can be applied to a motor sport environment.

The booklet then profiles a number of women who have been successful in forging careers at the highest levels of motor sport, including three-time Le Mans-winning race engineer and current Bentley engineer Gade, Force India Senior Strategy Engineer Bernadette Collins, Venturi Formula E Team Project Engineer and Team Manager Delphine Biscaye and Mercedes F1 Team Wind Tunnel Technician Kathryn Richards. Each offers insights into their role and advice for girls considering a career in engineering.

The brochure concludes by offering tips for future progress, specialist programmes devoted to advancing the involvement of young engineers in motor sport, sources of further advice and details of graduate schemes.

Click [here](#) for the English and French versions of the brochure.



FIA Women in Motorsport  
Commission Ambassador  
Leena Gade.



Celebrating International  
Women's Day at the WRC  
round in Mexico.

## Global motor sport marks International Women's Day

International Women's Day, which this year carried a theme of 'Be Bold for Change' was celebrated at a number of motor sport events across the world.

At the Mexican round of the FIA World Rally Championship, women working in different roles among the championship's teams, organisers and officials gathered for a 'show of solidarity' ahead of the weekend's action in and around the district of Leon.

In Mumbai, India some 800 women competed in an all-female rally on the Sunday before the big day. The event saw some 260 cars setting off on a 150-kilometre route.

"This is phenomenal," Sanjay Sharma, of event sponsor JK Motorsports, told the Times of India. "Most of these women are passionate about motor sports. If even one per cent of them take it up seriously, we would have achieved our goal."

The rally was the third such annual event organised by the Western India Automobile Association (WIAA) and was also aimed at creating road safety awareness for ladies. The winners were awarded their prizes by the WIAA on International Women's Day itself. "We will conduct this highly successful rally in four more cities from next year," added WIAA President Nitin Dossa.

Meanwhile, in Ankara, a delegation from the Turkish Women in Motorsports Commission, accompanied by a number of athletes, officials, volunteers and students, paid a visit to the mausoleum of the state's founder Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, who famously said: "Everything we see in the world is a creation of women."

The delegation was pictured with the banner of Middle Eastern University Automobile Club, and also wrote a dedication in the mausoleum's book of honour pledging to follow in the statesman's "footsteps in raising educated and ethical sportspeople."

Finally, in Hungary, a National Women's Commission was established by the Hungarian ASN, National Automobilsport Federation of Hungary, on International Women's Day which will be headed up by FIA Women in Motorsport Commission member Boglarka Budai.



A delegation from the  
Turkish Women in  
Motorsports Commission  
visited the mausoleum of  
Turkey's founder Kemal  
Atatürk.





# Women play major roles on historic stages

This year's Rallye Monte Carlo Historique featured a record number of female entries, with eight all-female crews taking part and over 50 female co-drivers also taking to the stages of what is perhaps the world's most famous classic rally.

The Coupe de Dames, the prize for the best-place female crew at the rally went to the number 167 pairing of Teresa Armadans and Anna Vives from Spain. The Barcelona-based crew also drove their 1979 Volkswagen Golf GTI to 70th place overall.

Elsewhere the crew of Tiffany Perlino and Harriet Ross were well-placed in their Lancia Fulvia when they encountered heavy snow on the Le Burzet stage. "It was tough, as always", says Tiffany Perlino, who says she relied heavily on the co-driver's skills. "She is a business woman, so she is very efficient with all the complicated stuff, the GPS, etc. Regularity is not easy to manage." The bad conditions cost the Monégasque-British crew 15 minutes and 20.000 points and they finished the rally in 176th place of 275 placed cars.

Perlino began rallying alongside her husband, Silvio, who drove an Opel Kadett in classics such as Tour de Corse Historique, SanRemo and Portugal. Latterly though she has got behind the wheel; herself. "At first, the men did not take us seriously, but now it is much better," she says, pointing to bodies such as the FIA's Women in Motorsport Commission, to which Tiffany is the representative of the Automobile

Club de Monaco, as being drivers of changing attitudes within motor sport.

The Norwegian mother and daughter team of Torhild and Tine Hallre embarked on course in a 1973 VW Beetle 1303S. Tine is an old hand at the event having taken part 10 times, though she admits competition budgets are hard to find. "Normal budgets do not include classic cars or Monte-Carlo rallies so we had to find a reasonably priced, historic rally car," she says. "On International Women's Day 2016, we launched a crowd-funding site for our big rally adventure. Everyone would get their names on the car, which we claimed to be powered by female Vikings!

"We ended up in 82<sup>nd</sup> place overall, and second in the Coupe des Dames! We also came seventh among the 18 Norwegian teams, most of which have lots of experience. Although we didn't take a trophy home to Norway, we are pretty proud of what we did and maybe we'll be back for the next fight in 2018."

Meanwhile, the multiple Coupe des Dames-winning German crew of Steffi Edelhoff and Birgit Binder, (they won in 2009, 2010 and 2013-2016) took their 1973 Ford Escort RS 2000, nicknamed 'Kurt', to 96th place overall.

For Steffi, Rallye Monte Carlo Historique is "so unique that we want to be a part of it every year. It is the joy of the historic vehicles, the international nature of the entrants, the weeks of preparation, the unforeseeable weather conditions, the demanding stages, the sporty ambition, the own border experiences, the roller-coaster of emotions and the unique flair.

"During the entire event, you struggle against yourself and only at the end of the event you see how your own performance was in the overall context," she adds. "We've participated nine times and we've seen the chequered flag nine times. In the overall classification, we always left 200 participants behind us, so that proves women can also have a say in the overall classification.

"The growing number of women's teams demonstrates that women are interested in technology, historical vehicles and motor sports, and can stand their ground," she concludes. "In the end you are proud of what you have achieved as a team and very quickly you realise that that you want to be part of the Rally Monte Carlo Historique again next year."

Words: Daniel Ortelli;  
photos: ACM/Jo Lillini



photo: Bruno Roucoules